

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/876,884

Applicant(s)

KUWAHARA, TORU

Examiner

Kirsten S. Apple

Art Unit

3693

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 7/27/07.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1 and 3-14.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
- ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This communication is in response to amendment filed 5/23/07.

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the prior art fails to teach or suggest the limitation of independent claims. The Applicant has claims a points reward system and method allowing increased points for specific bundled packages at specific time periods.

Independent claim 1 discloses a payment terminal with databases containing discounts or points associated with one item or a group of items. The group of items contains a "special promotion" or different points associated with them.

Independent claim 7 discloses a payment terminal with databases containing discounts or points associated with one item or a group of items. The group of items contains a "special promotion" or different points associated with them with a specific period of time.

Independent claim 9 discloses a payment method with databases containing discounts or points associated with one item or a group of items. The group of items contains a "special promotion" or different points associated with them.

Independent claim 10 discloses a payment method with databases containing discounts or points associated with one item or a group of items. The group of items contains a "special promotion" or different points associated with them with a specific period of time.

Independent claim 11 discloses a computer readable storage medium payment system with databases containing discounts or points associated with one item or a group of items. The group of items contains a “special promotion” or different points associated with them.

Independent claim 12 discloses a computer readable storage medium payment system with databases containing discounts or points associated with one item or a group of items. The group of items contains a “special promotion” or different points associated with them with a specific period of time.

Independent claim 14 discloses a computer readable storage medium payment system with databases containing discounts or points associated with one item or a group of items. The group of items contains a “special promotion” or different points and calculation capabilities.

The following prior art references have been deemed most relevant to the allowed claim(s):

Prostrel (US Pat. 6,594,640) teaches a system for accumulating points associated with “frequent flyer” or reward or point programs. Many companies including airlines, retail stores and even credit cards have points reward systems this patent allows users to combine these program together into one system. Users may then select items to purchase with the accumulated point. Prostrel is silent as to allowing a higher value of point accumulation based on bundling two product together either for the same of different merchants/vendors.

Riordan (US Pat. 6,078,891) teaches system of collecting marketing data. Specifically Riordan teaches a “bundled product” where “manufactures may at times bundle together the sale of two or more items” (see Column 9, line 17-29). Riordan is silent about any points or rewards programs.

Harris (WO 01/33451) discloses an international exchange for trading loyalty points and the like. This is conducted through an auction method where users can initiate, modify, cancel or conclude an exchange transaction. Harris is silent about bundled offers in this loyalty point exchange system.

Claims 1, 3-14 are allowed because Prostrel, Riordan and Harris references as discussed above as the Closest Prior art of record fails to teach or suggest a method or system for **administering a rewards or point system that not only provides points for certain purchases it allows the merchant to offer bundled product with an increased or different point reward. For example most stores provide 1 point per dollar purchased on goods in the store but this invention also allows a store to provide 5 points per dollar if they purchase Dove soap and Johnson's shampoo between a certain promotion time period. Riordan discuss bundling product but is silent about within a reward system and Prostrel and Harris talk about trading or combining points but none of the references hit on the novelty of this invention which is to provide an "extra promotion" through a points reward system for a set of "bundled products."**

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

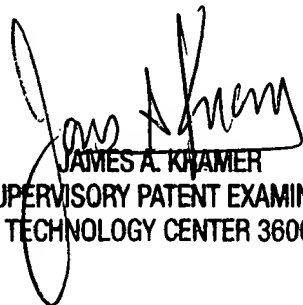
Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kirsten S. Apple whose telephone number is 571.272.5588. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 9:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Kramer can be reached on 571-272-6783. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-272-6126.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ksa


JAMES A. KRAMER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

7/30/07